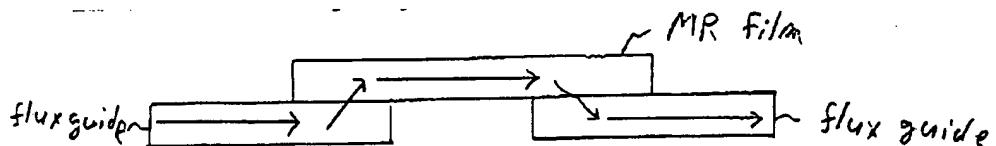


REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 8 to correct informalities. Specifically, the word “magnetoresistive” was amended to “magnetoresistance” for purposes of consistency. Applicants submit the claim objections have been overcome.

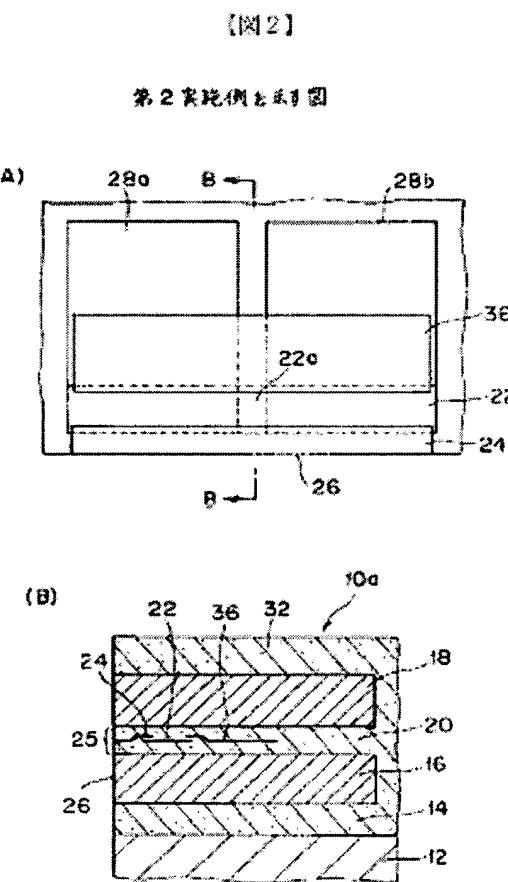
Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) on the basis of Koshikawa et al. (JP 6-325331) in view of Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,223,420). Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to more clearly distinguish the present invention from this reference. Applicants traverse this rejection because the cited references do not disclose or suggest a magnetic head having an MR film and a flux guide wherein a part of a surface of the magnetoresistance film overlaps and contacts a part of a surface of the flux guide, and wherein the surface of the magnetoresistance film is not an edge of the magnetoresistance film and the surface of the flux guide is not an edge of the flux guide, as in amended claims 1 and 8.

The magnetic head of the present invention is configured as shown in the following schematic:



As seen from the schematic above, a part of a surface of the magnetoresistance film overlaps and contacts a part of the surface of the flux guide. The surface of the magnetoresistance film is not an edge of the magnetoresistance film, and the surface of the flux guide is not an edge of the flux guide.

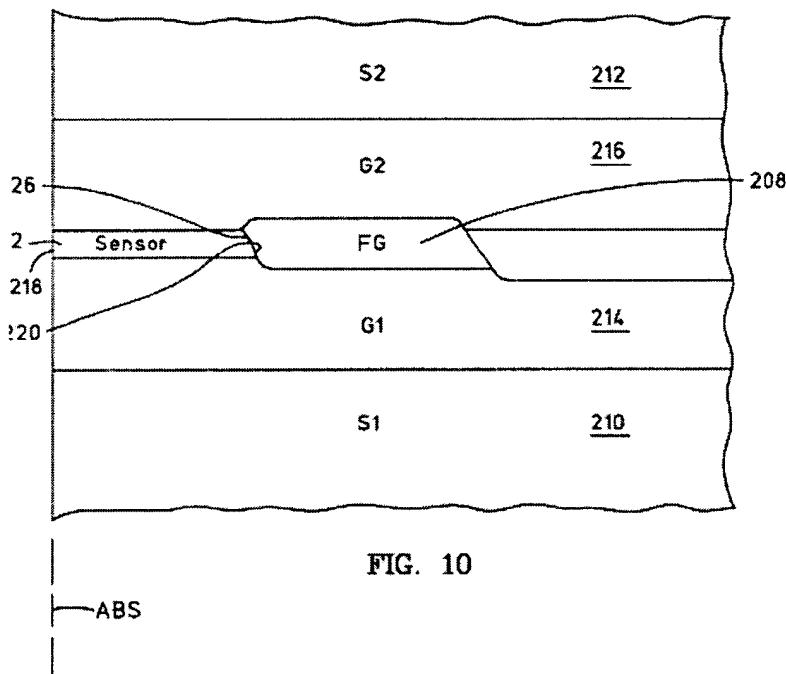
In contrast, Koshikawa et al. disclose a conventional magnetic head used in a reproducing device, including a magnetoresistance film (22) and a flux guide (24, 36). A surface of the magnetoresistance film (22) overlaps a surface of the flux guide (24, 36), but there is no contact between the magnetoresistance film and the flux guide. Figure 2 of Koshikawa et al. shows the spacing between the MR film 22 and the flux guide 24,36, below:



Thus, Koshikawa et al. do not disclose or suggest a magnetic head having a magnetoresistance film and a flux guide wherein the magnetoresistance film overlaps and contacts a part of the surface of the flux guide.

Further, Lee et al. is cited for disclosing a flux-guide regulating film aligning magnetic domains of the flux guide into a single magnetic domain. However, Lee et al. do not disclose or suggest a magnetic head having an MR film and a flux guide, wherein a part of a surface of the magnetoresistance film overlaps and contacts a part of a surface of the flux guide, and wherein the surface of the magnetoresistance film is not an edge of the magnetoresistance film and the surface of the flux guide is not an edge of the flux guide.

Figure 10 of Lee et al. is shown below.



In Figure 10 of Lee et al., a part of a surface of the magnetoresistance film “Sensor” (2) overlaps and contacts a part of a surface of the flux guide “FG” (208). However, the surface of the magnetoresistance film (2) that overlaps and contacts the flux guide (208) is at an edge of the magnetoresistance film, and the surface of the flux guide that is overlapped is an edge of the flux guide. This configuration is contrary to the features of claims 1 and 8 where “the surface of the magnetoresistance film is not an edge of the magnetoresistance film and the surface of the flux guide is not an edge of the flux guide.” Even if the references were combined, the flux guides (24, 36) of Koshikawa et al. would be indirect and would be in contact with the magnetoresistance film 22 along the edges of the magnetoresistance film, where the surface for the magnetoresistance film of the present invention is not in contact with the flux guide along the edge of the film. Thus, even combined, the cited references would not produce the present invention.

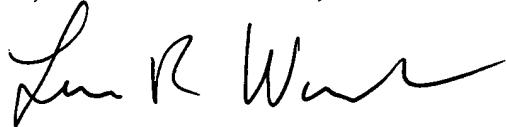
Moreover, there is no motivation or suggestion to combine the cited references. Lee suggests contact along an edge of the magnetoresistance film. In Koshikawa et al. does not disclose any contact at all between the magnetoresistance film and the flux guides. There is no motivation or suggestion to combine and modify the references to produce the claimed invention without the benefit of hindsight, which of course is prohibited. For this reason, Applicants submit that claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are allowable. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully

requested. The Examiner should call Applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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